

of Congress. This is the first of many, many more meetings we will have in the aftermath of the talk I gave to the American people last night. And I'm looking forward to beginning it. Thank you.

Q. What has been the response of the Republican leadership so far, Mr. President?

The President. As you know, we had a meeting before this meeting with the Republican and Democratic leadership of the Congress to discuss scheduling of hearings, debate, and vote. And we had a very constructive meeting. I think I should let them speak for themselves, but I was very pleased by the meeting.

Q. What will you do to overcome public skepticism, Mr. President?

The President. Just more of what we're doing. We'll keep answering questions and reasserting what is at stake here in terms of the values, the interests of the American people, and the leadership of our country and our partnerships with our allies.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Signing the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995

November 28, 1995

Today I have signed into law S. 440, the "National Highway System Designation Act of 1995." This Act advances my Administration's continued commitment to strategic investment in our Nation's infrastructure. It releases immediately more than \$5 billion in funding for highway and other transportation projects. It also implements my proposal for a "Zero Tolerance" policy toward drinking and driving by those under age 21.

I am disturbed, however, by the repeal of certain key safety measures and will work to mitigate the impact of their repeal.

This Act is the culmination of several years' work by all levels of government to identify highways of national significance—routes that will support our Nation's needs for efficient, safe, and reliable transportation. The designation of the National Highway System makes clear that transportation infrastructure should be viewed as a single system, with each mode complementing the others. Manufacturers and shippers rely on several modes of transportation to deliver their products to consumers in the most efficient manner possible. The National Highway System unites these different modes by providing access to major ports, airports, rail stations, and public transit facilities. The National Highway System also provides 53 critical connections to Canada and Mexico so that goods can move across our Nation's borders efficiently.

In 1992, I saw the way in which our Nation's highways reach all Americans. Vice President Gore and I traveled much of this great land in buses, and we met the American people where they live and where they work. Whether at a truck stop in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, or at dusk on U.S. Highway 51 in Sandoval, Illinois, we saw and heard what access and mobility mean to opportunity and economic well-being. It was during our first bus trip, from New York City to St. Louis, Missouri, that I made a commitment to rebuild America. And I'm proud to say, this National Highway System bill builds on all the work we have done in the last 3 years to do just that.

But the National Highway System is also something more. It is a prime example of the strategic investment of Federal resources. The National Highway System comprises only 4 percent of our Nation's highways, but these roads carry almost half of our highway traffic and most of our Nation's truck and tourist traffic. The improvements made to these roads will not only support our Nation's economic, national defense, and mobility needs, but directly and significantly improve the safety of these key national roadways. The funds released by this legislation and used to upgrade noninterstate highways will provide significant safety benefits.

This Act also includes an essential and commonsense highway safety measure. Last June,

I called on the Congress to make “Zero Tolerance” the law of the land and require States to adopt a Zero Tolerance standard for drivers under the age of 21. It is already against the law for young people to consume alcohol. This national standard will reinforce these laws by making it effectively illegal for young people who have been drinking to drive an automobile.

Many States have already enacted Zero Tolerance laws. These laws work—alcohol-related crashes involving teenage drivers are down as much as 20 percent in those States. When all States have these laws, hundreds more lives will be saved and thousands of injuries will be prevented. I commend the Congress for heeding my call and making Zero Tolerance the standard nationwide for drivers under the age of 21.

S. 440 establishes innovative ways to attract new forms of investment in transportation and gives States greater flexibility and more options to utilize limited Federal transportation funds effectively. It also eliminates unnecessary Federal requirements such as those concerning highway building materials and program management. This will enable Federal transportation officials to focus their efforts on the most useful and cost-effective ways of achieving important safety aims and increase States’ discretion to implement their highway programs in ways best suited to their own circumstances.

In approving S. 440, however, I must note that some of my most serious concerns with this legislation have not been remedied. I am deeply disturbed by the repeal of both the national maximum speed limit law and the law

encouraging States to enact motorcycle helmet use laws. I am also disturbed that this Act could potentially exempt large numbers of small- to medium-sized trucks and their drivers from critical safety regulations governing driver qualifications and truck maintenance.

Without question, these laws have saved lives. The States, now given greater authority over issues of highway safety, must exercise this authority responsibly. I am, therefore, strongly committed to the requirement in this Act for Federal and State officials to work together to assess the costs and benefits of any change in speed limits. I have instructed the Secretary of Transportation to develop an action plan to promote safety consistent with my Administration’s continuing commitment to highway safety. My Administration will redouble our efforts to protect those who travel on our Nation’s highways.

Although I am disappointed by the Congress’ actions on these important safety measures, I believe that this legislation will benefit the Nation by designating and funding the National Highway System, strengthening the backbone of our transportation system, providing jobs and economic opportunities, funding vital transportation projects in every State, and making Zero Tolerance the law of the land.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 28, 1995.

NOTE: S. 440, approved November 28, was assigned Public Law No. 104–59.

Message to the Congress Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

November 28, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby report to the Congress on developments since the last Presidential report of May 18, 1995, concerning the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order No. 12170 of November 14, 1979. This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c) and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C.

2349aa–9(c). This report covers events through September 29, 1995. My last report, dated May 18, 1995, covered events through April 18, 1995.

1. On March 15 of this year by Executive Order No. 12957, I declared a separate national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and imposed separate sanctions. Executive Order No. 12959, issued May 6, 1995, then significantly augmented